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Professor Abbe's intention in the preparation of his summary was to notice only those investigations that have given precise information as to specific plants or crops and specific localities; he has made a thorough search of all the more important literature, in so far as accessible to him, and the result is a useful handbook of reference for agriculturists, teachers of botany and climatology, and investigators along various lines of agricultural and botanical research. The agricultural colleges and agricultural experiment stations were especially in the mind of the author in the preparation of this volume. At the present time, when our Department of Agriculture is devoting so much attention to the introduction of new plants which shall be better adapted to climatic conditions in different parts of our country than those previously cultivated, this book will be of special interest to the scientific farmers of the United States. Professor Abbe's immediate purpose is stated by him in his preface in the following words:

As far as practicable, I have presented, in the words of the respective authors, the results of their own investigations on the points at issue, my own duty being not to undertake any extensive original study, but to merely connect their results together in a logical manner, to collect data for future general use, and to suggest or stimulate further inquiry on the points here presented.

The volume is very valuable in giving first-hand information, on the various aspects of the subjects with which it deals, in a compact form, easily accessible, well arranged, and fully indexed. The work is divided into four parts. Part I concerns *Laboratory Work, Physiological and Experimental*. Part II deals with *Open-Air-Work—Experience in Natural Climates*. In Part III, *Statistical Farm Work*, the crops and climates of the United States are considered. Part IV contains the bibliography and index. It is obvious that such a report as this will prove widely useful, and it is our hope that Professor Abbe will soon be able to prepare, and the Weather Bureau be able to publish, an extension of the work up to date.

R. DEC. W.

**Der Rhein und sein Verkehr, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Abhängigkeit von den natürlichen Verhältnissen. Von Dr. Friedrich Wickert**, in Wiesbaden, 148 pp., 2 maps, 29 diagrams. Stuttgart, J. Engelhorn, 1903.

Based upon very thorough search among German official and other literature on the great water-artery of central Europe, this book upon the Rhine and its relations to transit, trade, and industry is certainly a most deserving achievement. Necessarily, it is a compilation; but this conveys no reproach. Data, and data as copious and exact as those furnished by Dr. Wickert, can only be obtained from an abundance of documents. Fortunately, German literature on the subject is exceedingly full of information, and, still more fortunately, the author is most competent to make use of it. Clear and concise in his statements, moderate in his deductions and conclusions, he places before the student a wealth of material of the most positive sort, and never indulges in side-flings at extra-German countries and doings, such as often make German literature since the "great rise" of Germany in 1870-1871 so uselessly obnoxious. His language is plain and matter-of-fact, nothing more nor less.

His descriptions of the Rhine from the sources in southeastern Switzerland to the frontier of Holland could hardly be more exact. The allusions in it to the origins and movements of drift are well put and characteristic. With rivers of an alpine origin, two factors must be carefully considered. One, the amount and kind of drift they carry; the other, the periodical perturbances created by the

frozen sources of water-supply. This is very well accentuated in the description of the course of the Rhine as long as it remains under the direct influence of its alpine cradle. The rôle played by the Lake of Constance as a receptacle of drift carried by the river while yet in the state of a turbulent mountain stream, and of a clearing basin for the waters which emerge from it, leaving behind the detritus, is stated in few but expressive words.

Naturally, the main topics of the book—transit, trade, and industry, as affecting the Rhine and affected by it—become prominent only when the author has led his subject to where it becomes exclusively a German river. Previously only the northern bank of the Rhine, after leaving the Lake of Constance, is German, and through the affluence of Swiss branches of a partly alpine character and the geological features, to which Dr. Wickert is careful to refer, it is available only for rather primitive navigation, now largely superseded by railroads. The river becomes an important commercial highway only when it begins to flow between German banks. Dr. Wickert does not touch upon Holland. He might have done well, also, not to mention Swiss sections in a manner leading unsophisticated readers to suppose they might be parts of the German Empire of modern construction. The Canton of Graubünden, for instance, owes allegiance to Germany as little as any other part of Switzerland.

Very minute details, not only regarding the Rhine itself, but every one of its affluents on German soil, and taken from the most authoritative sources, constitute the bulk of Dr. Wickert's work. They are arranged geographically from south to north, and a wealth of tables, diagrams, and (at the end) highly-instructive maps, accompany them. The intention is to show the course of each tributary, the nature and resources of the countries traversed, the fluctuations of the water-courses produced by meteorological phenomena, and the influence they have had on transit, commerce, and industry, from former days (as far as data are accessible) to the present time. The author remains always true to his subject, not exceeding the limits that subject traces for him, but encompassing every thing that may be legitimately included. The historic side is treated in its proper place and in a concise manner. The flaws which have been pointed out do not affect the general excellence of the work. It is a book for study and reference, and a valuable contribution to hydrography and economic geography.

A. F. B.

**Le Tour du Montblanc. Par Emile Daullia.** viii-308 pp. Paris, Charles Mendel, 1899.

In this beautifully-illustrated volume the author is pursued too closely by recollections of *Tartarin sur les Alpes*. It is always difficult to imitate a genius like Alphonse Daudet, and when an attempt of the kind is to be harmonized with another "attempt" at serious description the outcome is usually a failure. Had Mr. Daullia confined himself to the rich material for description and information which his subject affords, and not tried to enliven his pages through too much "personal element," he would have produced a very readable book. As it is, there is not enough of the serious and there is too much of what *might* be entertaining, were it more vigorous. It appears that he sincerely enjoyed his "round-up" of the culminating point of Europe's highest mountains, that he felt the beauties of a scenery unparalleled, perhaps, anywhere; but the descriptions, however well written, are too much intersected by would-be humouristics of the mildest, most guileless, type.